CLAIMS

1.   A method of allocating a resource comprising the steps of:

retrieving data indicative of at least one bid comprising a quantity data component and a price data component;

5   retrieving second data indicative of a new bid comprising a quantity component and a price component;

first allocating said resource to said at least one bid with a price component higher than the price component of said new bid;

allocating said resource to said new bid responsive to said first
10   allocation step;

calculating said new bid's cost responsive to said price component of at least one bid with a price component lower than said price component of said new bid; and

storing cost data indicative of said calculated cost.

15   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein said resource is bandwidth.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein said new bid's resource allocation and said calculated cost are transmitted to an entity who made said new bid.

4.   The method of claim 1, wherein said allocated resource is
20   utilized by an entity associated with said bid.

5.   The method of claim 1, further comprising a step ordering said retrieved at least one bid by said at least one bid's price component.

6.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of retrieving data indicative of said resource's maximum capacity and wherein said allocation steps
25   are responsive to said maximum capacity.

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7.   The method of claim 6, wherein said resource is allocated to said new bid only if said first allocation in less than said maximum capacity.

8.   The method of claim 1, wherein an initial allocation of said resource is performed before said new bid is processed.

5   9.   The method of claim 8, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost is responsive to at least said retrieved bid with data indicative of said lowest price component which has been allocated in said initial allocation.

10.   The method of claim 8, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost is responsive to a plurality of said retrieved bids with data indicating said prices 10   which are lower than said new bid.

11.   The method of claim 1, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost is responsive to at least said retrieved bid with data indicative of said lowest price which would have received an allocation if said new bid was not retrieved.

12.   The method of claim 11, wherein said calculating said new 15   bid's cost is responsive to a plurality of said received bids with data indicative of prices lower than said new bid.

13.   The method of claim 1, wherein one of said at least one bid is submitted by a processor performing said allocation steps.

14.   The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one bid comprises 20   valuation data comprising a plurality of price components associated with a plurality of quantity components.

15.   The method of claim 14, wherein said allocation is responsive to said plurality of price components and said quantities components.

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16.   The method of claim 1, wherein said new bid comprises valuation data comprising a plurality of price component associated with a plurality of quantity components.

17.   The method of claim 16, wherein said allocation is responsive
5   to said new bid's plurality of price components and said quantity components.

18.   An apparatus for allocating a resource comprising:

means for retrieving at least one bid comprising a quantity component and a price component;

means for retrieving a new bid comprising a quantity
10   component and a price component;

means for first allocating said resource to said at least one bid with a price component higher than said new bid;

means for allocating said resource to said new bid responsive to said first allocation step; and

15   means for calculating said new's bids cost responsive to said price component of at least one bid with a price lower than said new bid.

19.   The apparatus of claim 18, wherein said resource is bandwidth.

20.   The apparatus of claim 19, further including means for storing
20   data indicative of said cost.

21.   The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for ordering said retrieved at least one first bid by said bid's price component.

22.   The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for retrieving said resource's maximum capacity and allocating said resource responsive
25   to said maximum capacity.

23.   The apparatus of claim 22, wherein said resource is allocated to said new bid by said allocation means only if said first allocation in less than said maximum capacity.

24.   The apparatus of claim 18, wherein an initial said allocation of
5   said resource is completed by said first allocation means before said new bid is processed.

25.   The apparatus of claim 24, wherein said calculating said second bid's cost by said allocation means is responsive to at least said retrieved bid with said lowest price which has been allocated in said initial allocation.

10   26.   The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost by said allocation means is responsive to a plurality of said received bids with prices lower than said new bid.

27.   The apparatus of claim 18, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost by said allocation means is responsive to at least said retrieved bid with said
15   lowest price which would have received an allocation if said new bid was not made.

28.   The apparatus of claim 27, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost by said allocation means is responsive to a plurality of said received bids with prices lower than said new bid.

29.   The apparatus of claim 18, wherein one of said at least bids is
20   submitted by an operator of said apparatus.

30.   The apparatus of claim 18, wherein said at least one bid comprises valuation data comprising a plurality of price component associated with a plurality of quantity components.

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31.   The apparatus of claim 30, wherein said allocation by said allocation means is responsive to said plurality of price components and said quantities components.

32.   The apparatus of claim 18, wherein said new bid comprises valuation data comprising a plurality of price component associated with a plurality of quantity components.

33.   The apparatus of claim 32, wherein said allocation by said allocation means is responsive to said new bid's plurality of price components and said quantity components.

34.   A system for allocating a resource comprising:

at least one bidding entity for providing bids comprising a quantity component and a price component;

a new bidding entity for providing at least one bid comprising a quantity component and a price component; and

A processor for first allocating said resource to said at least one bid with a price component higher than the second bid and for allocating said resource to said new bid responsive to said first allocation step; wherein said processor calculates said new's bids cost responsive to said price component of at least one bid with a price lower than said new bid.

35.   The system of claim 34, wherein said resource is bandwidth.

36.   The system of claim 34, wherein said processor transmits information indicative of said price component of said new bidding entity to said at least one bidding entity.

37.   The system of claim 34, wherein said processor retrieves data indicative of said resource's maximum capacity and allocates said resource responsive to said maximum capacity and wherein said resource is allocated to said new bid only if said first allocation in less than said maximum capacity.

5   38.   The system of claim 34, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost is responsive to at least said retrieved bid with said lowest price component which has been allocated in said initial allocation.

39.   The system of claim 34, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost is responsive to a plurality of said received bids with prices lower than said new 10   bid.

40.   The system of claim 34, wherein said calculating said new bid's cost is responsive to at least said retrieved bid with said lowest price which would have received an allocation if said new bid was not made.

41.   The system of claim 34, wherein said at least one bid comprises 15   a plurality of price component associated with a plurality of quantity components.

42.   The system of claim 41, wherein said allocation is responsive to said plurality of price components and said quantity component.